

Thursday, April 20, 2006
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NORTH DAKOTA BUSINESS CLIMATE STUDY 2006: New and Additional Action Items from the Breakout Sessions

Group A Additional Ideas

WORKFORCE

- Streamline and consolidate all activities and programs associated with job training and internships, bringing the resources into one pool in order to maximize impact.

IMAGE

- Create a multi-media website with attractive audio/visual displays and aggressively market the website (includes tourism, business and workforce marketing).

UNIVERSITIES

- Take a global look at the whole of education (grade school, high school, college/universities, adult skill training, trade education) and reengineer for outcomes to match market driven job opportunities.

ATTRACTING YOUNG PEOPLE

- Create attractive environments for youth (i.e. arts, entertainment, & other quality of life aspects) geared toward interests of youth (determined by focus groups).

TRANSPORTATION

- Examine current efforts and invest in building capacity to export natural resources out of the state (oil, coal, electricity, and agricultural commodities).

Group B Additional Ideas

IMAGE

- Develop an “image” training program for workers in the service sectors. These workers are often the front line contacts of visitors to North Dakota.

OTHER

- R & D Tax Credit of up to \$2 million, equal to 10% of the qualifying research expenses incurred in North Dakota per tax year. Credit becomes 12% if incurred in an empowerment zone.
- The state should hire a “State Economist” in order to build consistent short-term and long-term economic statistics needed to develop and support the state’s economic development initiatives.
- Support the Northern Tier Network which will provide connections to the National R&D Networks. Used to support research, education and economic development incentives for North Dakota and the region.

Group C Additional Ideas

WORKFORCE

- Consider creating a Lifelong Learning Program that would address the needs of mid-life “career changers” and older North Dakotans
- Be sure to include the trades in any other programs aimed at workforce development

IMAGE

- Study how we can create a program that encourages and assists smaller communities in further developing their image. This could include: beautification, branding, architectural improvements, historic preservation, etc. Consider both past ND programs, and also new concepts such as Certified Communities programs.
- Maintain and improve North Dakota infrastructure such as parks, monuments, etc.
- Continue and expand the internal image building programs
- Develop a uniform message or brand and standard talking points about ND

UNIVERSITIES

- Find ways to get the State Board of Higher Education to be more responsive to need for vocational education and training
- Study the way that current education resources are allocated to the system to insure that we are not missing opportunities to expand in needed areas (e.g., healthcare)
- Need more voc ed training

ATTRACTING AND RETAINING YOUNG PEOPLE

- Find ways to help them make money in ND; consider exploring areas such as Renewable Fuels
- Study potential for offering incentives to attract and retain young people, including/especially, in the trades
- Consider funding business mentoring offices such as Small Business Development Centers
- Consider direct incentives to young people who stay or come to ND to work in target industries

TRANSPORTATION

- Find ways to cut down the cost of flying in and out of smaller communities
- Explore ways to enhance intrastate transportation, including comfortable means such as limos
- Upgrade physical facilities and capacity at selected airports to encourage tourism and commercial activity